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Identical letters dated 20 July 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I am writing to inform you about a cowardly terrorist crime committed by armed terrorist groups against a child in Syria on Tuesday, 19 July 2016.

Terrorists from the Nur al-Din al-Zanki brigade, which is categorized by certain States as a "moderate armed opposition" group, acting in cold blood, murdered a Palestinian child no more than 12 years old, in public and before a crowd of people with cameras.

Video clips recorded by the terrorists and braggingly disseminated on the media sites of the so-called moderate opposition show the 12-year-old child dressed in civilian clothes surrounded by a group of terrorists in a pickup truck. Visible on one of his bare hands are bruises and wounds. A later clip shows one of the gunmen claiming that the child was a fighter in the Palestinian Al-Quds Brigade, and that he was captured during the clashes in the Handarat camp north of Aleppo.

Civilian testimony confirmed that the child is a Palestinian by the name of Abdullah Isa and that he was one of the remaining residents of the Handarat Palestinian refugee camp in Aleppo governorate. He was seized and taken away by the terrorists, who alleged that he was a fighter in the Palestinian Al-Quds Brigade, an allegation denied by officials of that brigade in a statement to the media.

Subsequently, the video recording shows one of the butchers from the Nur al-Din al-Zanki brigade slitting the child's throat then cutting off his head, to the shouts and cheers of the rest of the terrorists.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns this savage and iniquitous crime committed by the Nur al-Din al-Zanki terrorist brigade, which is supported and financed by the hate-mongering and extremist regimes in Riyadh, Doha and Ankara, and by the United States administration and other Western countries. Some parties insist on bestowing upon groups such as this the epithet "moderate opposition groups" and supplying them with money and weapons, while closing their eyes to the despicable crimes committed by these so-called moderates, such as the terrorist Nusrah Front, the Army of Conquest, the Army of Islam, Liwa' al-Tawhid, the Nur al-Din al-Zanki brigade, the Badr Martyrs Brigade, the Emigrants Brigade, the Islamic Front and other groups associated with or affiliated to Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qaida.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Secretary-General and the Security Council to condemn all of the crimes that have been committed against Syrian citizens and the camps of the Palestinian people in Syria, and to condemn the horrific, repulsive crime against this 12-year-old child. Syria also calls on the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to condemn this horrific crime, as he is supposed to be responsible for upholding human rights and ensuring that everyone, particularly children, women and the elderly, can enjoy them. If his staff have not informed him of this heinous incident, the Syrian Government urges him to watch it on YouTube or on the BBC News website.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic once again warns the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights that they cannot remain silent about the crimes of the armed terrorist groups, which some refer to as "moderate opposition groups". Failure to take deterrent action against the terrorists and their sponsors sends a clear message to the terrorists that they can step up their criminal activities. Moreover, the United States of America, France, Britain and the Ukraine have rejected requests to include the organizations Army of Islam and Ahrar al-Sham on the Security Council lists of terrorist groups, undertakings and entities. That approach also sends a clear message to the terrorists that they can continue to slaughter, destroy, loot and steal. It shows that those and other States, particularly France, Britain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey, are not serious about combating and suppressing terrorism. Indeed, it is a testament to their hypocrisy and double standards in the war on terrorism.

Any party that genuinely wishes to fight terrorism must coordinate with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and its army, which is fighting terrorism throughout Syria. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls for this crime to be condemned, along with all of the other crimes that are being committed on a daily basis against children, women, men and the elderly in Syria. It calls on the Security Council to assume its responsibility to uphold international peace and security by taking punitive measures against those States and regimes that support and fund terrorism; by preventing them from persisting in that course of action and jeopardizing international peace and security; and by compelling them to comply fully with the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative